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Subject: [GPML] Installing fiber-optic cable along Strathmore
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To: <GPML@googlegroups.com>

As many of you have undoubtedly noticed, cable is being undergrounded along Strathmore Avenue; the local project began at Rockville Pike and has now progressed through Garrett Park Estates to Kenilworth in Garrett Park. Cable will be laid the length of Strathmore, crossing from the north side to the south side of the street near the east end of Garrett Park.

The work is being done by a contractor for AT&T, which has a permit from the State to use the right-of-way. They are digging hand holes at intervals and boring underground for the cable; it will not be trenched. Although the street trees on Strathmore are planted in State right-of-way, the Town has responsibility for their maintenance and upkeep. We have expressed our concerns about the well-being of the trees to both the contractor and AT&T. AT&T has pledged to keep the bore deep, below the root line of the trees. We have received assurances that the minimum depth for the bore is 42", which the Town's consulting arborist judges to be adequate to avoid harm to the trees. Bore depths in the portions already completed west of town have ranged from 48" to 80" deep, and average approximately 60".

We have also expressed concern about soil compaction over the tree roots, caused by running trucks and machinery over the unpaved portion of the planting strip. Soil compaction is a serious problem for street trees throughout Town; it deprives trees of oxygen and results in slow death for the tree. AT&T has pledged to do as much as possible to avoid compaction over tree roots.

Town personnel have monitored the work and will continue to do so. We wanted you to be aware of the nature of the project and the fact that the Town is taking a number of steps to assure minimum impact on the Strathmore street trees.

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